

Moran Asks Kansas Farm Service Agency Officials to Reconsider Decision to Close County Offices

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Congressman Jerry Moran today asked the Kansas state office of the Farm Service Agency (FSA) to reconsider its decision to close county offices in Kansas. Yesterday marked the final public meeting in counties across the state where closings are proposed.

"This is not about saving money," Moran said. "FSA has not provided adequate assurance that this plan will result in better services for producers or be a significant savings of taxpayer money. Furthermore, it is premature to close FSA county offices before Congress writes the 2007 Farm Bill, when future administrative and program needs will be decided."

FSA officials indicated the consolidation plan could be revised if new information was presented during public meetings. Suggestions from Kansans have included constructing new buildings, renegotiating rental rates, providing subsidized office space and making service on FSA county committees voluntary rather than paid positions.

"Part of the mission of the U.S. Department of Agriculture is rural development," Moran said. "It seems counterproductive that while the Rural Development Agency is promoting opportunities in rural areas, another agency of USDA would diminish the viability of small Kansas communities."

Moran pledged his continued support for keeping county offices open in Kansas. He is a senior member of the House Committee on Agriculture.

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